1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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Kurtatchi

of the bush, bread-fruits were to be seen lying about on the ground in large quantities in various stages of rottenness, where no one had chanced to pass that way to pick them up.

The bread-fruits are obtained by climbing the tree and knocking them down; those above hand reach are hooked off by jerking them from their stalks with a stick lashed, pointing backwards, on to the end of a long pole.

Bread-fruit is cooked by being laid on the top of a fire of sticks, directly exposed to the flames (Pl. 34). When the outer skin is completely charred, the inside is done to their liking. The blackened skin is scraped off with a black-lip oyster-shell knife, and the soft inside pulled to pieces with the fingers and eaten in great hunks. The large seeds it contains are very much relished. They may be eaten as they are, or cooked again by being laid in the embers, just as we roast chestnuts, which they strongly resemble both in look and flavour. Bread-fruit is never pounded or made into pudding.

Leaves eaten as vegetables. Although the taro plant is cultivated principally for the sake of the tubers, its leaves are also used as food. Other kinds of leaves, grown in the taro garden or wild in the bush, are likewise eaten, also the tender tips of some species of bracken (*Pteris*). They are prepared by being boiled in pots with water, generally sea-water, or with the addition of some sea-water, for the sake of the salt. When done, they look and taste not unlike spinach. In the mountains, where there is no pottery, they are cooked by being thrust into a length of bamboo, without water, the bamboo being then laid on the fire. As I know from experience, the resulting dish is both succulent and tasty. (I was told that pig, cut into small pieces, is also cooked in this way, but I did not see it done.) I have never seen this method of cooking in bamboo without water in use among the coast natives, where it is not necessary since they can obtain, from the women of Malasang, pots in which to boil their food.

Nobody would deliberately cut down a coco-nut palm in order to eat its heart, but if one is blown down, or has to be removed for any reason, the heart is hacked out and eaten with great enjoyment, either raw, or, more frequently, boiled like taro, in a pot lined with leaves.

There is a species of seaweed which can be obtained from the reef at low tide, which is eagerly sought for and eaten just as it comes from the reef, in spite of, or perhaps because of, its saltness.

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be obtained from white men, which is a kind of plug twist, mixed with molasses, and made up into sticks about 6 inches long. The same word (*wuruts*) is used for both native and trade tobacco. Portions of stick-tobacco are twisted off and crumbled, and are smoked either in pipes or in the form of cigarettes, made of any kind of paper that happens to be available. The newspapers sent to me from home were in great demand for this purpose. I once gave a man a half-sheet of the *Observer*, and was amused to see him roll it obliquely into a cigarette of enormous length, which he smoked with great satisfaction, to the envy of the onlookers, and somehow succeeded in keeping alight. The height of smoking luxury, however, consists in a tin of Capstan and a packet of cigarette papers. When they have no tobacco they will pick up a piece of smouldering wood from a fire, crush it into their pipes, and smoke it with apparent content. They like to mix with their tobacco a resinous gum (*tagon*) collected from the trunk of the canarium almond.

Pipes are made in certain villages where a suitable supply of clay can be obtained. One man on Petats was considered especially skilful. He got his clay from the neighbourhood of a river on the island of Buka. It appears to be similar to that used for pottery-making on the opposite side of the island. The work is usually done inside the hut, so that the clay will not dry too quickly. The bowl is shaped in the finger, and the stems are moulded round a thin cane which is then pulled out. The pipes are baked by being laid in the embers of an ordinary house fire. They are also made in some of the villages on Bougainville, especially in the Kunua district, but not in any of those on the north coast, the people of which obtain them by barter. In the Kunua villages I saw some with patterns incised on the bowls, but as a rule those in common use have plain bowls, with slight differences of shape in the projecting piece at the bottom. The length of the stems varies a little, but is generally not more than 3 or 4 inches.

CHEWING THE BETEL-MIXTURE

Just as universal as the habit of smoking is that of areca-nut chewing (*gas*), which begins perhaps even earlier, since babies a few months old are given the husks of the areca-nut to suck. I have seen a man spit his mouthful into the hand of a child aged perhaps six, who chewed it for a while and then transferred it to

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dropped some excrement on to the coco-nut shell, and it flared up; this was the first fire.

It will be noticed that neither of these versions account for the process of making fire by rubbing. But the second story, which I heard at Tiop, tells how a man and his wife, while drying their taro in the sun, saw two branches which were being rubbed together by the wind. They tried it for themselves, and first smoke came from the sticks and then flame. Then they brought wood and made a big fire and cooked their bananas on it. At first the other men were afraid, but presently they came and asked where the two had found this thing. They said they had found it in the bush. Then they showed all the people how to make fire and how to keep it alight.

WOMEN'S WORK

Pottery

There is only one place in Buka and North Bougainville where pottery is made.[1] This is the group of six small hamlets, three on the cliff and three on the shore below, which make up the village of Malasang, on the east coast of Buka towards its southern end, about six miles from the entrance to Buka Passage.

All the women of Malasang know how to make pots; they teach the craft to their daughters and to the wives of their sons. A novice starts by making small pots, increasing the size of her products as she grows more skilful. Only a few of the women can make the very largest pots. There seems to be no standard of skill except as regards size. I did not hear of any woman noted for making especially fine or well-shaped ones. They are made in large numbers, far in excess of domestic requirements, since there is a market for them over the whole of Buka and North Bougainville.

Materials.

There are two ingredients in the mixture from which the pots are made. The bulk of it consists of a greenish clay called *petako*. It is quite plentiful in the bush, and is uncovered by the pigs in their search for water. The other ingredient is called *mĕmia*, and

[1] Pottery is also made on the east coast of Bougainville, near Kieta, where the technique is similar, but the shape slightly different, and at Buin on the extreme southern end of the island; the manufacture of the latter I have not seen (Pl. 61*a*, no. 4).

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317 323 is described as being of a reddish colour and resembling sand. It comes from a big hole in the side of a mountain some little distance from the village. The women told me that if too little *mēmia* is mixed with the *petako* the pot is not strong, if too much, it is brittle. They could not explain the right proportions, but judge by the feel of the mixture as they knead it in their hands. The two ingredients are not kept separate till required, but large quantities of the mixture are prepared and kept in baskets of woven coco-nut leaves.

323 317 789 When a woman goes to get the *petako* for the first time, she must not go close to the place, or the *petako* will be spoiled. She stands some distance off, and the other women go first, and sprinkle the ground with pigs' fat. Then they bring back a handful of *petako* and give it to the newcomer, who may then approach and take her share. As far as I could learn, there is no ceremony connected with the getting of the *mēmia*.

Technique.

323 The potter works at her craft in the early morning and in the late afternoon. The sound of the tapping is heard almost at dawn. When she is not working, the half-finished pots rest on a low platform of thin logs placed slightly apart, between which the pots are set, the logs providing sufficient support to keep them upright. The platform runs down one side of the hut, and the small girls of the family are kept busy fetching and carrying pots for the worker who sits at the far end. There may be a couple of dozen on the platform at one time, with very little space between them. Setting them up is a ticklish business, but woe betide the child who lets one fall over, injuring its delicate edge. I watched one unlucky little girl to whom this happened trying, with more optimism than judgement, to repair the damage with her own unskilful fingers. The result was disastrous. All the operations, except the firing, are carried on indoors. If the work is done outside, the sun spoils the clay. As a very special favour, one potter brought her work outside so that I could take photographs.

323 516 The potter sits on the ground, but some women prefer a low stool, made by fixing a plank upon a couple of small logs. Her legs are stretched out in front of her, with the knees slightly bent, the pot resting on them.

323 In beginning a new pot, a lump of the mixture is taken in the hand, and worked into a ball about the size of a tennis ball. The

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PLATE 58

a. MAKING THE BASE

b. PUTTING ON A COIL

POTTERY

[facing p.396]
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1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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PLATE 59

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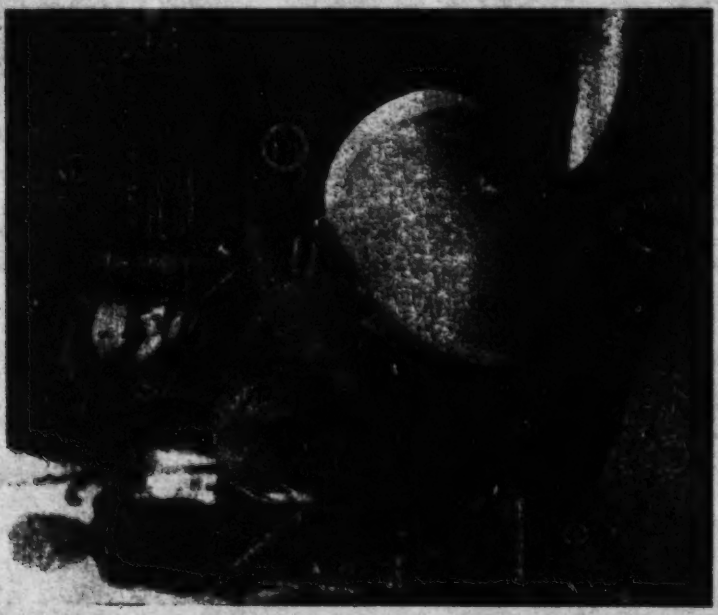
516



b. DECORATING

a. SMOOTHING A COIL

POTTERY

[facing p. 397]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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Kurtatchi

potter then lays it in her palm, takes up a smooth flat stone (*rako*) in the other hand, and holding the stone with her four fingers on the inside of the lump, and her thumb on its outside, she hollows the ball into a bowl shape with quick, short sweeps of the stone, turning the clay in her hand as she runs round the edge (Pl. 58*a*). This base is then put aside to dry, and another is begun. 323

At the next session the potter takes a handful of clay in her wet

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FIG. 24. Spatula used in pottery making.

palm, and kneads it with the fingers of the same hand. One of the bases prepared at the previous session is then picked up, and the clay very quickly and deftly applied all round its edge, adding about an inch to its height (Pl. 58*b*). No attempt is made to construct a sausage-shaped roll before applying it to the pot; the amount required is squeezed out between thumb and first finger. The thumb is kept inside the pot, and the four fingers curled round the outside. The first finger is pressed down as the clay fits round the pot, leaving a crinkled appearance which is afterwards smoothed out with the hand dipped in the broken pot full of water which stands by the worker's side. One handful of clay went round a pot about 12 inches in diameter. On a larger pot, if the first handful is not enough to go round, a second lump is taken, the ends are made to overlap the first strip for a couple of inches or so, and the joins completely smoothed out. The result of this process is to provide the pot with an edging about an inch deep and from ¼ to ½ of an inch thick at the top, projecting slightly on the outside and smooth inside, like the rim of an ordinary flowerpot. The pot is then put aside again to dry. The potter will keep a dozen or more going at once, at two or three different stages of construction, putting another layer on each in turn.

At the next session the potter takes up the pot and lays it across her knees. She then takes the flat stone in her left hand, and in her right a small wooden spatula or beater *sakaak* (Fig. 24), which she dips into the pot of water beside her. With quick light strokes she flattens out the rim of clay, holding the stone underneath and [413]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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323 beating the clay down on to it, turning the pot round as required (Pl. 59*a*). After every few strokes the beater is dipped into the water, and a tap is given to the stone with the wet beater before the beating is resumed; this has the effect of keeping the stone moistened. The work is done very rapidly. A band which when first applied was about an inch in height and ½ to ¾ of an inch thick, adds, when flattened out, between 2 and 3 inches to the height of the pot, and has a thickness of about an eighth of an inch. It is very flexible, bending under the hand of the woman as she smooths it over after the flattening with the beater is finished. It is then put aside again. Both inside and outside are now perfectly smooth, with no sign whatever of the joins between the layers.

Special care is taken with the last layer, which is to form the rim of the pot. After it has been flattened out, the potter runs round it with first finger inside and thumb outside, pinching off tiny pieces to make it even, and then smoothing the edge with thumb inside and all four fingers extended on the outside. During this process she will stop several times to look at it, and when she has finished she will ask the opinion of those standing by as to whether it is symmetrical. Not till every one has expressed satisfaction does 323 she proceed to the next process, which is to put the ornamentation 531 round the edge. This is done with the fluted edge of a shell (*katsibélo*, a species of *Arca*). The pattern is not intended simply as an ornament. It was carefully explained to me that it also serves as a mark of identification, so that a woman would recognize her pot if any one stole it. There are several designs in general use, differing slightly from each other, but a potter will put the same one on several pots in succession. On the pot I saw being made, a line of diagonal scratches was put on nearest the rim, extending about three inches down the sides of the pot. These were made with the fluted edge of the shell (Pl. 59*b*). Over these lines, about an inch from the rim, a horizontal line of wavy marks was made with one corner of the shell. The edge of the pot was then very lightly fluted by a succession of quick impressions made with the edge of the shell. Frequently, however, the edge is merely pricked, or it may be left smooth.

323 The pot is then put to dry in the sun. Apparently it does not matter much whether it stays a longer or shorter time in the sun before being fired. The firing is always done just before dusk. A layer of hot ashes is laid down and carefully spread out with a

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PLATE 60

a. PREPARING TO FIRE

b. FIRING POTTERY

[facing p. 398]

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531.

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a. TYPES OF POTTERY
1. *Tabeli* 2. *Kolo*
3. *Kopa* 4. Pot from Buin

b. CARRYING POTS HOME FROM MALASANG

E-facing A 398

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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stick. A piece of smouldering wood is laid on the top of the ashes, and a few sticks across the edges, forming a rough rectangle. The pots are laid on the ashes almost horizontal, but with their rims propped up against the outside sticks (Pl. 60*a*). Four pots face one way, four the opposite way, their pointed bases alternating in the middle. Sticks are then laid upright against the pots, making a kind of fence all round. Other sticks are laid lightly on the top of the pots, but they are nowhere completely covered. The fire from the smouldering wood left inside soon makes its way through. The sticks are dry, and of a wood which catches fire easily, and the whole structure is soon a mass of flames (Pl. 60*b*). It burns down to ashes in about ten or fifteen minutes. The pots are then taken out with the aid of a long pole, and left in the air for a short time, care being taken to put them inside the house before darkness falls. The next day they are fired a second time, in precisely the same manner, and are then stored in the rafters of the house until required. It is said that the smoke of the cooking fire going up on to them makes them strong. When freshly fired they are of a yellowish-brown colour, except where the sticks have touched them, where they are burnt black. No care is taken to avoid this, as it does not show when they have been smoked for a time in the rafters; they are then uniformly black. In this condition they are sold. No glaze or slip is used, neither is any attempt made to burnish or polish them. 323 ●

Shape and size.

There are two shapes. One is circular at the top, with sides nearly parallel till near the base, when it tapers to a point. This point is fixed in a heap of ashes when the pot is in use, firewood being then piled around the sides of the pot. Pots of this shape are called *tabali* and are used for the ordinary household cooking, which consists chiefly in boiling taro (Pl. 61*a*, no. 1). One of about the average size measured 15 inches from base to rim when held upright on the ground, 11 inches in diameter at the rim, 36 inches in circumference at the rim, and 37 inches at the widest part, about 4 inches below the rim. I saw no very large ones, but I was told that they are sometimes made to stand as much as 3 feet from the ground, with a diameter which I estimated at something like 18–20 inches (both measurements indicated by gestures). A large pot such as this is called *ebowa* and is used for cooking pig, but is 323 415

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323 415 not often in demand. A very small pot is called *kolo* (Pl. 61*a*, no. 2). The other shape is elliptical, with a lip at each end for pouring. It is called *kepa* (Pl. 61*a*, no. 3). Its main use is for boiling the squeezed oil of grated coco-nuts to be added to pounded taro in the manufacture of ceremonial pudding (see p. 274) by the men.

Barter of pots.

438 436 Natives from all over Buka and the north-western end of Bougainville make trips to Malasang to trade for pots, and the Malasang people also bring them, sometimes, in canoes to other villages for barter. Their subsequent exchange for other goods carries them still farther afield. A medium-sized pot can be bought for three sticks of tobacco (the equivalent of one shilling) or an equal value in paint, cloth, &c. A large pot is worth four or five sticks, a very small one may be had for two. They are packed up very skil-
482 fully in the areca-palm fibre carriers (*kōbū*), and are taken to their destination on the backs of the women, piled so high that it seems almost impossible for them to arrive intact, yet they do (Pl. 61*b*).

201 765 Pots are broken ceremonially by their owners as a sign of anger or grief. The pots of a dead woman used to be broken by the mourners, but this custom is dying out.

323 I have not discovered any use that is made of potsherds. They lie about in large quantities in every village and on the sites of deserted villages. They are not broken up fine to serve as grit in the making of new pots, as is done by some primitive people.

323 713 The most careful inquiries failed to elicit any legends or traditions connected with the origin of pottery-making, the first potter, or the discovery of the clay. All they could tell me was that the craft had been practised for so long that nobody knew how it started. It is exceedingly flourishing at the present day, and there seems no likelihood of its dying out, or even being modified by the introduction of European tools, for some considerable time to come.

TERMS USED IN POTTERY-MAKING

(*Malasang Dialect*)

323 192 *Materials and tools.*

Term	*Explanation*
pétako	a greenish clay, obtained just below the surface soil in the bush.
mémia	substance said to resemble reddish sand, obtained from a hole in the side of a mountain some distance inland.

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sáksak	wooden beater.
rako	round flat stone used to beat on. (*Rako* is the generic term for 'stone'.)
katsibélo	shell resembling a cockle, used to scratch the pattern on the rim of the pot.

Operations.

tápo	knead ball of mixture of *petako* and *memia*.
pósala	hollow out ball of mixture with hand and *rako* to make bottom of pot.
bónóna	put on a coil of clay round the edge of an unfinished pot.
sak	beat down the coil with *saksak* and *rako*.
síki	smooth over with wet hand.
katahamátsko	(lit. 'make good') pinch off bits of the edge to make it even after putting on the last coil.
nónoa	put on the ornamentation round the edge.
tántin	fire the pot.

Women's hoods

The hoods (*tō* or *ʤílō* in the Petats dialect, *tákop* in the Kurtatchi dialect) are worn by the women of Buka and the north coast of Bougainville (but not on either east or west coasts of that island) in accordance with the rule of avoidance of the relative called *halis* in the Petats dialect and *waris* in the Kurtatchi dialect, i.e. the husband of a daughter or a sister's daughter, and his brothers (see p. 73). The women carry their hoods with them whenever there is the least chance of coming across one of these taboo relatives, and put them on at his approach. They are worn in any case on all special occasions, such as a ceremonial visit or a ceremonial *kōma*. The women also find the hoods useful to keep off rain or the heat of the sun, and are careful to protect the heads of the babies they carry on their backs while working. When not in use, the hoods are folded up along the joins of the leaves of which they are made. To put on the hood is *uwa takop*.

The hoods are made of pandanus leaves. The strong mid-rib is first stripped off, and the prickly outer edge of the leaf is cut away with a knife made of the black-lip oyster shell. The leaves are then left for a little while to dry in the sun. The next process is to rub them with sand very thoroughly, to clean and smooth them. They are then rolled up tightly and laid on the ground, where they unroll a little. There they remain till thoroughly dry, being turned over

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Woven designs.

301 531 [438] The woven arm-bands are obtained from the people of the mountains, and are not made locally. The meaning of most of the designs could not be ascertained. That figured in Pl. 67, no. 5, which somewhat resembles a Greek key pattern, was said to represent a man, but no explanation was forthcoming.

765 531 [565] A number of different patterns are incorporated in the mourning

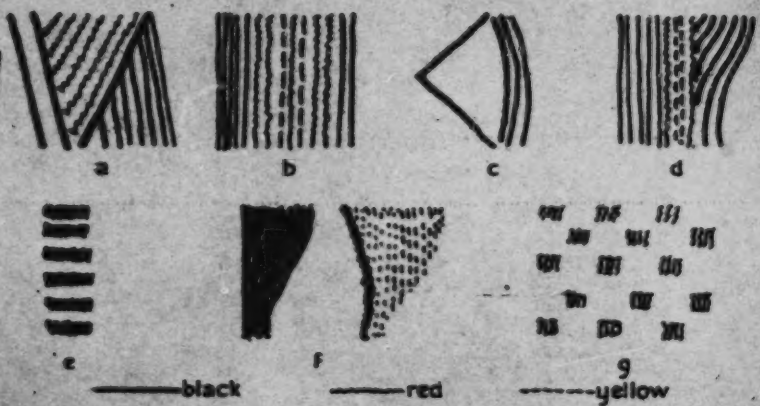

FIG. 28. Patterns on mourning belt.

belt woven by the women on the occasion of the death of a person of rank (Pl. 75, no. 1). These are all traditional, and were explained as follows (the letters refer to Fig. 28): (*a*) *pekpeko*, name of pattern; (*b*) *tapare*, name of pattern; (*c*) *mamar*, a little fish found on the reef at low tide; (*d*) *bar*, the iguana; (*e*) *wirē*, a small sea-urchin plentiful on the reef; (*f*) *hatfian*, croton leaves; (*g*) *oman a tō*, fruit of the sago palm.

Patterns on pottery.

323 531 [472] The only patterns used on the Buka pottery are the simple nicks and lines, made with the crinkled edge of a shell, or with the finger-nails, round the edges of the pots (Pl. 61*a*). At Malasang, where the pots are made, I was told that these marks, besides being put on for ornament, also served as a sign of ownership. But I noticed that the potter put the same pattern on several consecutive pots, so no monopoly of pattern could be claimed by the several owners.

On the Shortland Islands a very crude sort of money, which is called 436
mŭŭli locally, is made for commerce with the inhabitants of the Crown 171
Prince Range; the mountain people call this money ŝputa. It consists of a conus mussel, whose pointed end has simply been broken off and whose upper end has been pierced so that it can be strung; the individual shells are about 7 millimeters wide and 7 millimeters in diameter.

[23] In the mangrove regions of Buka and north Bougainville you frequently find the shells of a bivalve, which are strung on a string by the hundreds. These strings also are used as money for trade with the mountain [439]
people.

Although the previously described objects represent the value of 437
actual money, this still does not imply that the natives use only these objects as media of exchange in commerce among themselves and with their neighbors. Rather, all their superfluous possessions are also used for this same purpose. The agricultural mountain inhabitants swap fruit to the coastal inhabitants for fish; armrings of tridachna and conus, as well as woven armrings, are favorite barter objects when it is a matter of trading for spears, bows and arrows; and scarcely an object can be mentioned that does not represent a certain market value.

Household Equipment

The household equipment on the northwestern Solomon Islands is 323
practically the same from Buka to Shortland, even though local variations [171]
occur. Characteristic for this region is the knowledge of pottery-making. Cooking pots of baked clay, but without a glaze, are to be found in every house. The method of manufacture is the same everywhere: first the clay is carefully kneaded and freed of all pebbles; then the potter (the making of pots is exclusively the affair of the women) takes a fist-size piece into her hands and, using a round stone and a wooden spatula, she forms the bottom of the container; when this part is finished, strips of clay of about 10 to 20 centimeters in length and 2 to 3 centimeters in width are placed on the edge of the finished base; with her left hand the potter holds the round stone on the inner surface and fits the edges together with the dampened spatula. In this way strip after strip is built up until the pot is finished. In order to handle the pot more easily, they prepare a ring of

banana leaves into which they put the half-finished pot while the upper sides are being formed. When the pot is the right shape, then here and there--wherever the side walls seem to the maker to be too thin--little clay patches are added for strengthening. After the edge as well as the outside and the inside have been made as smooth as possible with dampened hands, a decoration in the shape of zigzag lines is frequently scratched on the edge. The manufacture of a middle-sized pot takes about an hour. The completed articles are dried for several days in the shade and then baked. This last procedure is very simple. Several pots are placed beside one another, and dry twigs and little pieces of wood are built up around them; then these are ignited and, for a certain time, new fuel is added; after about 8 hours the pot has been sufficiently baked and is ready for use. Pots of the most varied dimensions are to be found--between 15 and 30 centimeters in diameter, but rarely more. The form of the pots differs in the north and in the south of the region under consideration. In Buka and north Bougainville the form is conical, the sides are slightly rounded and the rim is not bent outwards. In Shortland and south Bougainville the shape is almost spherical and the opening is narrow with a rim that is flared out.

After acquaintance with the Europeans and the introduction of smoking tobacco the islanders successfully undertook the manufacture of pipes. Fifteen years ago you could frequently buy pipes there that were made of two pieces. The clay bowl had only a very short shaft, which was inserted into a thin stem, and the point of connection wrapped with bast fibers; today they have already made a certain sort of progress by preparing the bowl and the shaft out of a single piece and often decorate the bowl with engraved ornaments. The local product is now preferred to the European almost everywhere.

It is surprising that no one has come up with the idea of making clay drinking vessels or water containers. Coconut shells are used exclusively for these purposes. In the north they are superficially scraped on the outside with a stone; but in the south great care is often applied to their preparation. In Shortland I have seen specimens that were provided with a coating made from the pulverized fruit of Parinarium laurinum; into this shell [23] disks and beads were pressed and delicate ornaments were formed by this means. They had two shapes: the one was spherical and called fasi, and the other had a short neck, which was likewise decorated like the above container, and called kungkuku. Now these containers are becoming rather